**iCanConnect Helps Sisters from Colorado Stay in Touch with Family and Friends**

Lena and Tina Stolper are 20-year-old sisters. The women live with their family, including their triplet sister, in Arvada, Colorado, and have been participants of iCanConnect, also known as the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program, since their early teens. They are individuals with deaf-blindness, and with their combined other health-related issues, including cerebral palsy and autism, it was uncomfortable for them to socialize and difficult to communicate with people outside their immediate family.

Lena and Tina learned about iCanConnect during a presentation by iCanConnect Colorado representative, JoAnne Hirsch, Communications Technology Program Manager of the Colorado Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind. After they applied and were accepted into the program based on iCanConnect’s disability and income guidelines, they each received an individual assessment of their distance communications needs and goals.

Through iCanConnect, Lena received an iPhone and iPad along with training on how to use her new equipment. “Using the equipment gave me confidence to communicate with others outside of our house,” said Lena. “I text friends, video chat with out-of-state family, and send emails for classes. Using video chat, I am able to continue therapies - like speech, occupational, physical, and ABA - which were in-person visits and had to end due to the pandemic.”

Tina received an iPhone and an iPad through the program, and recently, when it became more difficult for her to use the iPad screen, she received a PC with a large screen monitor. “The trainers have been very patient in teaching me how to use the equipment,” says Tina. “Now, I can email, text, video chat, and make phone calls to family and friends. I’ve also been able to continue with online classes and virtual therapies throughout the pandemic.”

“I would definitely recommend the program to anyone wanting to overcome communication roadblocks that come with vision and hearing difficulties,” says Lena. “We are grateful for iCanConnect and for all the people who help with the program. It has truly been a blessing.”

“I recommend iCanConnect to anyone with hearing and vision issues so they can get help too,” says Tina. “This program - and the people helping with it - are blessings. I love having a way to see, talk to, and write to my friends and family. Thank you, iCanConnect, for helping me!”